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ABSTRACT

A study investigated how elementary teachers use literature in their classrooms, focusing on what instructional philosophies drive elementary literature programs; elementary teachers' knowledge of children's literature; and which books are being read to children and which books they are reading on their own, so that their "literary" knowledge can be ascertained. Seventy-four subjects--46 classroom teachers; 15 reading, special education and gifted and talented specialists; 5 librarians; and 8 administrators from 6 schools in Albany, New York, two each from urban, suburban, and rural settings--were interviewed. Lists of books, school or districtwide policy, individual teachers' weekly schedules for language arts activities, and student writing samples were also analyzed. Results indicated that: (1) the subjects expressed a strong belief in the importance of literature in the elementary curriculum; (2) reading aloud to students was the most widely used activity for involving elementary students in literature, followed by independent reading by students and by guided reading; (3) almost all students of the teachers interviewed spent half an hour a week in the school library; and (4) poorer readers were treated the same as better readers in terms of read-aloud and independent reading activities. (Three tables of data are included; 26 references and 3 lists of interview questions are attached.) (RS)

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# TEACHING LITERATURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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A Report of a Project on the Elementary School Antecedents of Secondary School Literature Instruction

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Report Series 1.3

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# Teaching Literature in Elementary School

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**Background**

In a recent report on the state of secondary students' knowledge of history and literature (Ravitch & Finn, 1987) the authors drew the following conclusion:

> Looking at the overall history and literature assessment, we conclude that the "glass is almost half-empty." Though there are topics, eras, genres, and types of questions that elicit passing scores from the 11th grade sample, and though there are a handful of individual questions on which the students do honors work, the average student fails both halves of the assessment. Put differently, the average question is answered correctly by fewer than 60% of the boys and girls in the sample. We cannot tell from a "snapshot" assessment of this kind whether today's students know more or less about history and literature than their predecessors of ten, twenty or fifty years ago. We do conclude, however, that they do not know enough. (Pp. 119-120)

While these findings have been subject to differing interpretations (Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1987), nonetheless there is a public perception that secondary students are not as knowledgeable about history and literature as they should be. Further, several authors (Bennett, 1988; Ravitch, 1985; Ravitch & Finn, 1987) view this as much as a problem of elementary school history and literature instruction as they do secondary. For example, Ravitch (1985) states:

> The dearth of literature in the elementary school may go far toward explaining some of the problems encountered by secondary-school teachers, who complain that children don't like to read, don't read well, and can't apply what they read to their own lives... The children of this regime arrive in junior high schools and secondary schools knowing how, but not why or what. They have been miseducated; they have been taught to read without learning to love reading; they have been taught social studies as a package of skills rather than as a window on the varieties of human experience in other times and places. (Pp. 78-9)

Indeed, these authors make recommendations for the teaching of literature in elementary school. Ravitch and Finn (1987) make several broad recommendations: for example, that more time and attention be paid to teaching literature from the earliest grades; that schools should define the essential ingredients of a coherent literature curriculum (K-12); that only those who are well educated in history or literature should teach those subjects in the schools. Bennett (1988) lays out a "model" elementary language-arts curriculum that emphasizes the importance of literature, especially classic children's literature, as a valued component of the program.

These studies and their recommendations imply that elementary schools do not properly attend to the teaching of literature, yet very little is known about how literature is taught in elementary schools. How much time and attention is paid to literature in elementary school? Do elementary schools have a coherent literature curriculum? What do elementary teachers know about children's literature? What literature do elementary students actually read?

The purpose of this study was to explore how elementary teachers are using literature in their classrooms, and it focuses on several aspects of this use. Firstly, it explores what instructional philosophies drive elementary literature programs. We know little about elementary teachers' beliefs about the role and purpose of literature in an elementary curriculum. There are several possible contenders (Walmsley, 1981; Walmsley, 1988): (1) an academic philosophy that places great stress on "classical" literature, which at the elementary level would perhaps be exemplified by using Junior Great Books, Newbery Award winning books, or the list of "classics" provided by Bennett (1988); (2) a literacy skills philosophy, which stresses the mastery of reading skills in which literature simply provides text on which to practice reading skills; (3) a romantic philosophy that emphasizes the need for children to choose and direct their own reading (e.g., Uninterrrupted Sustained Silent Reading), and which promotes "recreational" reading; (4) a cognitive-developmental philosophy that stresses cognitive growth in part through literary 'problem-solving'; and (5) an emancipatory philosophy that emphasizes the potential of reading literature for promoting social and political change. This list is not exhaustive, nor are the various philosophies mutually exclusive, but it does suggest markedly divergent perspectives on the purpose of literature in the elementary school. Certainly there are major philosophical differences between the treatment of literature in a typical basal reading series (i.e., short extracts, followed by reading skills exercises) and its treatment by educators such as Atwell (1987) or Veatch (1968), who advocates full-length literature as a primary vehicle for literacy instruction.

Secondly, we need to know about elementary teachers' knowledge of children's literature. Did their preservice training include coursework on children's literature? Are they familiar with current techniques for teaching literature? How do they keep their professional knowledge of literature up-to-date?

Thirdly, we need to know which books are being read to children and which they are reading on their own, both in and out of school, in part because what they read and what is read to them constitutes their "literary" knowledge, and in part because if we knew what this literary knowledge comprised, we could use it to judge the effects of having experienced certain kinds of literature on subsequent reading achievement, cognitive development, and affective development. Fielding, Wilson, & Anderson (1986) and Greaney (1980) have provided valuable data on the positive correlation between the amount of book reading and reading achievement. The question remains, which books are responsible for these improvements in reading scores? In this context, we need also to know which books are being made available to students, and how they came to be selected: for, as Waples (1937/1972) observed, what is read depends largely on what is available. Of the roughly 2,000 new titles published each year that are suitable for Grades K-6, less than half are reviewed and recommended for selection. There is not a great deal of overlap between the various "recommended" lists of books by journals, books, and professional newsletters; we know little, it seems, about how particular books end up in the hands of elementary schoolchildren and how others do not.

Fourthly, we need to know how literature is "taught" in elementary schools. Do teachers

treat literature like reading lessons, in which children read aloud "round-robin," answer the teachers' questions, and write responses to comprehension questions on the plot, characters, and the meaning of vocabulary? Or do they have the children read silently, respond to the text subjectively, and participate in discussions on aspects of the books that are meaningful to them? Is there a set of standard routines used by elementary classroom teachers to help children select books, to help them engage in reading them, to have children respond to them, and to know if they have actually read them? If not, what is the range of teaching strategies, and how are they related to instructional philosophies? There seem to be three different kinds of instructional activities related to literature (Walmsley & Walp, 1989, in press)--a teacher reading a book aloud to children, a teacher and children studying a book together (what we would term "guided," "directed," or "shared" reading), and organizing a program for children to read literature on their own ("independent" reading). We need to distinguish between reading that takes place in school and that which takes place out of school; we also need to differentiate instructional and personal uses of literature. It will be useful to know if these are viable categories in which the various kinds of literary activities can be described. While there have been several studies where the teaching of reading has been closely observed (Allington, Stuetzel, Shake, & Lamarche, 1986; Armstrong, 1980; Galton, Simon, & Croll, 1980), these researchers have generally ignored, or have found no evidence of, how much and what kind of literature children have actually read; nor have they studied how literature is used to promote reading skills or habits. In psychological studies of the reading process, moreover, there seems to be little interest in how children read full-length literature (is it assumed to be simply "extended" reading?), nor what literature they read, nor how such reading assists in the development of their reading ability and their literary knowledge. On the other hand, studies that have investigated the kinds of literature actually read by children (Greaney, 1980; Norvell, 1973) have generally explored this phenomenon outside of the school context, so they shed little light on what goes on in school.

Finally, we need to know whether one's status as a reader determines the exposure to literature and what the effects are of this differential exposure. Poor readers traditionally are exposed to less connected text than are good readers in reading instruction (Allington, 1983), and the practice of establishing literature programs for good readers (who presumably have mastered the prerequisite reading skills) but not for poor readers seems to be widespread. It will be useful to learn how the literary experiences of good readers differ from those of poor readers, and what the consequences of these different experiences are.

## Method

### *Sample Selection*

Six schools in the Albany, New York, area, two each from urban, suburban, and rural settings, volunteered for the study. In each site, K-6 classroom teachers, reading, special education and gifted and talented specialists, language arts coordinators, and elementary principals were asked to participate in the study. Participation was strictly voluntary. A total of 74 school personnel participated in the study--46 classroom teachers, 15 specialists, 5 librarians, and 8 administrators.

*Procedures*

The Structured Interview

Structured interviews (copies of which will be found in Appendices B to D) were constructed by the senior author, consisting of both closed and open-ended questions designed to elicit participants' views on the following:

1. What philosophy do teachers and other staff (e.g., librarians, language arts supervisors, principals, etc.) hold with respect to the teaching and use of literature in the elementary school?

2. How do teachers use the literature in their classrooms (for example, what literature [actual titles] do they read to students, what do they assign to students to read, what do their students actually read, how much time is devoted to various aspects of literature, and what are the major teaching/responding/testing strategies employed? What is the role of the school library in literature instruction?)

3. In what ways is the literature program different for good and poor readers?

Interviews were conducted at the participants' convenience: in some schools, teachers were given released time during the school day; in others, teachers volunteered to be interviewed after school. Almost all interviews were conducted on school premises, either in a classroom (teachers, specialists), an office (supervisors, principals), or a conference room set aside for the interviews.

Interviews lasted approximately one hour. All interviews were tape-recorded; field notes were also made in case of tape-recorder malfunction.

Additional Data Collection

In addition to the interviews, we gathered the following information, where it was available:

1. Lists of books used in the literature program in the current year (read aloud, guided reading, independent reading);

2. School or district-wide policy on literature teaching and/or written literature curriculum;

3. Individual teachers' weekly schedule for language arts;

4. Samples of individual students' reading inventories, response "logs," and book reports.

*Data Analysis*

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription service. Content analyses were performed on the transcripts to determine participants' views on their instructional philosophy, their reported teaching practices, and the ways in which they saw their instruction as being different for good and poor readers. This analysis involved synthesizing information from various parts of the interviews. For example, respondents referred to their instructional philosophy towards the use of literature not only in answer to a direct question on that topic, but also at other times during the interview, when answering other questions. We also compared reported teaching practices with reported instructional philosophy, and with other evidence (e.g., teachers' background training, book lists, teaching schedules, and the research literature) in an attempt to "triangulate" the descriptions we were receiving. In choosing this approach to data gathering and analysis, we followed closely the procedures used by Fraatz in her study of the use of ability grouping (Fraatz, 1987).

**Results**

The description and discussion of the findings from the interviews are presented below. The instructional philosophies are discussed first, then an analysis of practices, broken down into five major sub-topics: (1) read-aloud; (2) guided reading; (3) independent reading; (4) use of libraries; and (5) the teaching of literature to better and poorer readers.

*Instructional Philosophy*

We sought to discover what respondents saw as the role of literature in the elementary curriculum, and we asked a direct question about how respondents characterized their approach to using or teaching literature in their language arts program. Their instructional philosophy was also reflected in their answers to the questions about teaching practices. In some cases, what teachers articulated as their own instructional philosophy in answer to the direct question was at variance with the activities they described later in the interview. Most seemed well aware of this discrepancy because they commented on the gap between philosophy and practice. It is clear to us that many teachers are in the process of developing a stance toward the use of literature in their classrooms, and have yet to settle on a particular set of beliefs or practices. There were no teachers in the study who did not articulate a strong belief in the importance of literature in the elementary curriculum. We should note, however, that because we sampled teachers and schools on a purely voluntary basis (they knew before agreeing to participate that we were seeking their views of the use of literature) the sample is biased in favor of teachers who are already disposed toward the importance of literature. Nevertheless, no one went so far as to suggest that literature replace the basal reader as the sole vehicle for reading instruction, K-6; rather, literature was an important supplement to the core reading program.

An examination of the data revealed several different philosophies toward the use of literature reflected in the participants' responses. One program seemed to reflect a "romantic," "child-centered" view of literature. In this program, both teachers and administrators felt strongly that children should choose their own books, that no reading skills instruction should accompany this reading, and that the purpose of this reading was for pleasure and enjoyment only. Another program took the view that the purpose of using literature was to "enrich" the reading skills instruction, especially for better readers: in this program; after the reading skills

had been taught and mastered (toward the end of the school year), teachers would be encouraged to have students read trade books. The remaining programs appear to reflect an "eclectic" philosophy, in which literature is treated as one of several important reading activities to be engaged in throughout the school year. In these programs, teachers engage their students in full-length literature (reading to them, reading with them, and having them read independently) just as they engage them in other reading tasks (e.g., reading in the basal reader, doing work on reading skills development).

In terms of the instructional philosophies referred to earlier (Walmsley, 1981), we saw little evidence of an "academic" philosophy expressed by the teachers we interviewed. Even those teachers who used Junior Great Books or Newbery Award winning books, who might be expected to have articulated an academic philosophy, did not do so. Rather the use of the Junior Great Books program, Newbery Award winning books, or "classics" seemed to be more the result of wanting to have a variety of approaches and materials available to students than it was derived from a strong commitment to introduce students to "classical" literature.

None of the respondents specifically articulated an "emancipatory" philosophy: no one spoke directly about the potential of literature in promoting social or political change, nor even about its role in lessening stereotypes. Nor did participants give examples of a "cognitive-developmental" philosophy, which seeks cognitive growth through literary problem-solving. We did, however, hear several examples of a "literacy-skills" philosophy--references to literature as primarily vehicles for practicing reading skills. But it was the "romantic" philosophy we heard the most examples of--not only because it provided the philosophical underpinnings of one school's literature program, but also because it was the set of beliefs most commonly referred to by individual teachers from all the schools we interviewed in.

We noticed another phenomenon related to instructional philosophy; it was how many teachers seemed to have different instructional philosophies for different students (especially better versus poorer readers), and for different literature-related activities. For example, almost all read-aloud and independent reading activities appeared to be driven by a "romantic" philosophy, but the majority of guided reading activities seemed to be driven by a "literacy skills" philosophy. It would appear that one philosophy generally drives the direct teaching of reading skills and full-length literature, while another drives the read-aloud and independent reading programs.

*Instructional Practices*

In terms of how teachers use literature in their language arts program, we organized their responses into three major categories: "read-aloud," "guided reading of full-length literature," and "independent" reading. In each of these categories, we tried to learn about the kinds of books they used and how these books were selected, and about the classroom routines (i.e., time allocation, teaching strategies, response/evaluation, expectations).

Two issues related to the general question of how literature is used in the elementary curriculum are presented in separate sections. The first concerns the use of libraries: how do teachers and students use the school library and what is the role of the school librarian? The second concerns differential instruction for better and poorer readers. Do all students have equal access to the literature program? Is the treatment of literature the same between the two groups? We compiled all the respondents' statements relating to these two issues, and present

them here in separate categories. We recognize that these issues are not divorced from the general question of how literature is used in elementary school. We present them in separate categories only to provide a more focused description.

Read-Aloud

The data collected in this study indicate that read-aloud is the most widely used activity for involving elementary students with literature; 95% of all the teachers (classroom and specialists) interviewed reported reading aloud to their classes. Furthermore, 77% of the teachers who read aloud did so on a daily basis. These teachers allocated an average of 14.25 minutes per day for reading aloud to their students. Only three teachers (one reading specialist, one Gifted and Talented teacher, and one 5th grade teacher) reported doing no read-alouds in their classrooms; all three gave the same reason for not doing so: insufficient time in the schedule. The reading specialist reported that her remedial reading classes were only 30 minutes long and that she allocated half of the time for independent reading and the remainder of the time for reading skills instruction (which she did through the use of children's literature). Although she expressed how important she felt reading aloud to children was, she stated that there simply was not enough time to include this activity.

In order to learn more about their purposes and procedures for reading literature aloud to their students, we asked classroom teachers and specialists several questions. We asked them about how they selected books for read-aloud and what titles they had selected so far this year, how much time they allocated and where in the day was it scheduled, what teaching strategies they used, how children were expected to respond, and what they expected children to gain as a result of this activity.

*Selection of materials for read-aloud.* Full-length books were the choice of most teachers in the study, although a number of teachers opted for excerpts from books, or shorter pieces (e.g., poems, short stories). Although some teachers clearly stated that they read full-length books in their entirety, and others that they read only extracts, we were unable to infer from the lists of books that teachers said they read to their students whether they read the books in their entirety or if they read only extracts. Appendix A, Table 1, presents a partial list of the books read aloud to students by teachers in the study. This list is incomplete because many of the teachers we interviewed do not keep track of the titles they read aloud.

Literature used in read-aloud activities appears to be selected from a variety of sources, based on a range of criteria. The source teachers reported most often could best be described as "word-of-mouth": books recommended by fellow teachers, the school librarian, the teacher's children, or the teacher's own students:

> Interviewer: How do you select the books that you're going to read to children?
>
> 3rd Grade Teacher: A lot of times I'll do it on the recommendation of the kids. They'll ask me to read a book. For instance I started with one of the Peggy Parish books this year, and they wanted to hear them all. So we ended up with all of them. I also get recommendations from other teachers, and I also explore the book shelves a lot in the book stores.
>
> Interviewer: How does that come about? Can you think of a book that you've read to

the kids recently that came about as a result of somebody else recommending it to you?

3rd Grade Teacher: James and the Giant Peach.

Interviewer: Who recommended it to you?

3rd Grade Teacher: Another teacher, but I think it was her child that recommended it to her. He came home and was really enthused about it from another school district. Well, she's a third grade teacher, and she said, "Since I started this morning, the kids are just totally involved in it." I had never heard of it before.

Interviewer: You hadn't heard of it ?

3rd Grade Teacher: No, in fact with that book, I probably would have shied away from it because I just read The Twits, which one of the kids had recommended which I think is thoroughly disgusting, and I think I would have shied away from that author at that point. The first time I read James and the Giant Peach, I thought there's no way I'd ever have the kids read this, and when I read it the second time I said yes, I can see where they might get a lot out of it, and they'd enjoy reading it, and it would be fun to read, but the first time I read it, I thought this is awful.

This teacher had taken a graduate level children's literature course as well as having attended several workshops in children's literature. Like many of the teachers who described the recommendations of others as their primary source for literature, it does not appear to have stemmed from a lack of knowledge about children's literature. On the contrary, it appears to be a conscious decision on the part of these teachers to seek out titles that have been tried and met with success as read-alouds.

Some teachers relied on their own reading of children's books as a source for their read-alouds. Others read books that they themselves had read or books that had been read to them when they were children:

3rd Grade Teacher: I remember in the fourth grade, my teacher read Heidi to me, and that was one book I just loved. And I can remember in grade school still having teachers read to me, and that was one of the nicest parts of the day. So sometimes it's just something that I've enjoyed. Or once in a while the children will bring in something that they have particularly liked to share, and then I'll do that. I do tend to screen what they bring in. I get robot books and books that are based on cartoon characters on TV and I don't read those. I say that's fine and that's for their reading, but not for schoo!.

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Interviewer: Do you do reading aloud to the students?

6th Grade Teacher: Yes, I do. I don't do as much as I would like to do. I read a Carl Sandburg short story, which is excellent. It's a really good way to start, especially at the beginning of the year, if you've changed reading groups, plus it's a delightful story. It's

fun to read. Over the past few years, I've read Black Beauty, Five Peppers and How They Grew, Little Men, Little Women, stories that I had read or been exposed to when I was growing up, and Treasure Island. Some poetry, I don't do as much as I would like to do. I really don't do as much as I would like to do. I always feel pressured, to get through particular curriculum material, so I don't spend as much time as I would like to. Eventually I would like to get a little bit better organized, so I can do more of it. To be very honest with you, the other reason why I do not read out loud a great deal, is because I don't feel as though I'm a good oral reader. And, I feel that probably, much of the story is missed by just the way that I read. So, I normally try to get them started with something, and I do do some, but not as much as I would like, or not as much as what had been read to me when I was growing up.

Interviewer: So when it comes to selecting books to read aloud, you pick books that you enjoyed yourself, or ones that were read to you as a child?

6th Grade Teacher: Exactly.

Interviewer: Do you use any list of titles, such as Newbery Award Winners?

6th Grade Teacher: My source is books that I'm familiar with. That's normally what I do. Unless I hear about a book, for example From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs Basil E. Frankweiler. That story I realized one time was a real popular story with children, so I read that to them, maybe for a couple of years in a row. Oh I remember too, E.B. White, when he was just becoming popular, and I remember reading Charlotte's Web. If I run across a really interesting book, or if I run across a really good poem, I'll share it with the kids. So normally it comes from myself.

Some teachers were influenced in their selection by recommendations of authorities in children's literature (e.g., Jim Trelease, Frank Hodge) or referred to lists of children's literature to assist them in their selection of books to read aloud (e.g., Newbery Award winners, Caldecott Medal winners). Interestingly, none of the teachers made explicit reference to college courses in language arts or children's literature as sources for selecting books to read aloud.

In terms of the criteria teachers used to determine a good candidate for read-aloud, it was clear that what they chose was influenced by a variety of factors. A few teachers articulated specific criteria they followed for choosing material--e.g., books with excellent illustrations, books that did not have long, descriptive passages, books with rich language, books that would hold children's attention, books that students would not pick on their own. Student response to books read aloud also served as a criterion in teachers' selections. A number of teachers described selecting books that their students had not enjoyed, and they stated that they would not use these titles again. Several teachers described how they left a read-aloud unfinished because their students were not enjoying it. The criterion that the books be literature the students enjoy also reflects the majority of teachers' stated purpose for doing read aloud--namely that it be done for pleasure and enjoyment.

3rd Grade Teacher: I try to see if I can find a book that is really interesting to the children. Sometimes books that I thought were going to be interesting were not. And sometimes something that I thought wasn't going to be interesting turns out to be. For example Farmer Boy, right now I'm reading it, the first time I read it, I read it because

a child asked me to, and I found the children of this age love that book. They want to read along with me. They bring copies in from home, or they get one at the bookstore, or at the library, to bring it in.

Interviewer: So if a child brings in a book, and asks you to read it, do you?

3rd Grade Teacher: Sometimes I do that. I try to read it over, and to be honest, if I think it's poorly written, if it has no challenge to it, I won't read it aloud. If it's a book like The Hardy Boys, and I don't want to put something down, but I don't regard it as a very high level of literature, and I would tend not to use something like that.

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Interviewer: What makes you choose what you read aloud?

5th/6th Grade Teacher: Well just things that we've tried in the past, and we know that the students have liked, based on our experience with other groups. We also try to pick some classics, and we try to pick things that they can relate to in their every day life.

Teacher response to a piece of literature also served as a criterion in the selection of read-alouds as can be seen in some of the above quotes. If teachers found the language or content offensive (as was described earlier in reference to using James and the Giant Peach after having read another book by the same author that the teacher found "disgusting"), or if the literature did not meet their standards for good, high quality literature, it was not selected. When asked to define high quality literature teachers generally referred to the "classics" as examples. Charlotte's Web (E. B. White) and the "Little House" books (Laura Ingalls Wilder) were frequently given as examples of what they considered high quality literature.

Interviewer: Would there be particular kinds of books that would definitely not get to be read aloud? Are there categories of books, or particular features in books that make you choose it for read-aloud or not?

2nd Grade Teacher: Well I think we look at the elements of literature with interesting characters, plot, or setting. If a child brings in a Golden Book or a thing like that, unless it particularly relates to something that we are doing, I might say, you might want to read that to a group. I wouldn't say we're not going to read it, but you might want to read that to a group of your friends, but I think we're going to read this book today or something like that. I generally try not to censor them in such a way they don't want to read in school. Or I ask them what is it about this book that you thought was interesting, or might be interesting to others, because there may be something I'm missing. Maybe it's really good. But I generally try to look at the elements of literature, and see if they're there because we talk about those at this level. And try to bring them out.

A few teachers considered the connection of read aloud titles to topics they were studying in the content areas, or from classroom "themes," or they capitalized on current events in the classroom as part of their criteria.

Interviewer: Do you read full length books or extracts or both?

5th Grade Teacher: Everything. Whatever pops in my mind I read. The day we had that snow last week I came in with The Snowy Day and read that aloud, I liked it and it fit the mood at the time. That's how I choose things. I also choose things according to curriculum. In science we are studying whales, and so two books I have chosen are Whale Songs and then Crystal: The Story of the Baby Whale, an actual baby whale that was born, and the book is written about it. That's how I choose books, according to curriculum and teaching.

Interviewer: And those two books you're going to be reading aloud?

5th Grade Teacher: Yes, to the whole class.

The amount of time available for reading aloud also influenced a number of teachers in their read-aloud selection. Some teachers expressed the feeling that the read-aloud selection needed to be completed within the read-aloud period. This led them to choose shorter books or excerpts from books. If teachers used excerpts from books, they typically would read the first chapter or two from a book, and then encourage children to finish reading it on their own.

*Allocation of time for read-aloud.* A breakdown of allocated times by grade level is presented in Appendix A, Table 2. From this table, it will be seen that all but one of the classroom teachers in this study read aloud to their students. Most of them read aloud on a daily basis, for an average of 14 minutes. The specialists read aloud to their students less frequently, not because they did not feel it important, but rather because they did not have enough time during the (typically) 30 minutes allocated to their classes. In fact, both classroom and special teachers commented on how they regretted not being able to spend more time reading aloud, but the pressures of the elementary curriculum militated against it.

We also inquired about what time of day teachers scheduled read-aloud activities. Most teachers reported scheduling read-aloud outside of the language arts period. Quite often read-aloud was done immediately following recess after lunch, so that children would have a quiet time to relax, listen, and enjoy the experience of being read to.

*Teaching strategies for read-aloud.* In most instances, teachers insisted that if reading aloud was treated as an instructional activity, its goal of nurturing a love of reading would be diminished. For this reason, most teachers simply read straight through the selection, either stopping occasionally to discuss or clarify the text, or postponing any discussion (in some cases, any interruption) until the end. In many cases, teachers reported that discussions about the reading material often arose from questions students had during the read-aloud itself, rather than as a consequence of a predetermined plan by them to guide the reading with comprehension or vocabulary questions. Before starting a new book or selection, all the teachers felt that some time should be spent introducing the material (e.g., its author and illustrator, other books they had read by the same author), but once the book was under way, the procedure was simply to briefly review what had been read in the last session, and to continue reading. In general, children's comprehension of the real-aloud was not formally assessed, nor did teachers regularly assign any follow-up activities, in keeping with their philosophy that read-aloud should be done for enjoyment and pleasure.

Interviewer: Do you read a section all the way through without interruptions, or do

you encourage interruptions? How does that go?

3rd Grade Teacher: It depends on the book. Sometimes the book needs explanation. Farmer Boy, which is the one that I'm reading right now, some of the words are very unfamiliar. These are suburban children, and they don't understand what is being discussed. And if they can't pick it up quickly from the context, then I might explain. When we did a book on the Underground Railroad, there was a lot of interruption and a lot of discussion during that book. The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room doesn't require a lot of explanation. It's a fairly straightforward book, but Patricia Reilly Giff is a good author for them to get into, particularly if they're having some difficulty reading.

Interviewer: So depending on the book, you might take that 20 minutes and read all the way through, or you might get in a little way and start a discussion on something. When you're all done reading, do you follow it up in any way?

3rd Grade Teacher: No.

Interviewer: So there isn't a section at the end where you review, or ask questions?

3rd Grade Teacher: Well I ask them to respond, or, once in a great while I might say to them, well what do you think about that, what do you think is going to happen? But it's not a long discussion. I don't go on at that point in time, with a great deal of discussion. I don't ask them to respond in writing. I don't usually ask them to write, or draw something, but sometimes, depending on the book, I might stop and send them back to draw a picture based on the book.

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Interviewer: Then you would read through it. Do you ask any questions at the end?

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: Most of the read aloud is for enjoyment. So we might talk about it, how did it compare to the others, we might look at the illustrations, do you like these illustrations, are they different from the other ones? It really depends on why we're reading it.

Interviewer: I think I hear you saying, there really isn't any set way that you're looking for the kids to respond to the read aloud. There aren't specified activities that you use with them.

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: No, there's no specified follow-up. Like last year we read How To Eat Fried Worms, and I have a hard time listening to that book, it's a little gross I think. But the kids knew that that's how I felt about it, so they made me a barf bag. They took a paper bag and they wrote Mrs._____'s barf bag. We just finished reading Stone Fox, and with that they got me a box of tissues.

Interviewer: The kids thought that idea up?

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: Yes, it kind of emerged. It seemed like a fun thing to do, so we might do something like that.

In terms of the physical arrangements for reading aloud, all teachers stressed the informality of the sessions, allowing children either to sit at their desks or on the rug (especially in the early primary grades). Teachers sat either in rocking chairs or on their desk; some circulated around the room while reading. A few teachers allowed children to draw pictures while they listened; the majority insisted that children sit quietly and attend.

*What teachers expected children to gain from read-aloud.* We inquired from teachers what they hope children would gain from the read-aloud experiences. Almost unanimously, teachers said that their goal was to nurture a love of reading, to show children the enjoyment and pleasure they could derive from reading. Most teachers also wanted to use read-alouds to expose children to books and authors, to broaden their reading horizons, and to model good reading. A few teachers emphasized the importance of read-alouds in developing particular skills such as improving listening skills, developing vocabulary, and improving various comprehension skills such as sequencing. Some teachers also viewed read-aloud as a way to extend current classroom events or topics of study. In this way, read-aloud could help develop their knowledge or awareness of the topic. Several teachers mentioned how reading aloud could serve as a springboard for other activities, such as writing. Students might draw from the read-alouds for ideas or themes for stories and characters they were writing about. The following quote summarizes the goal of read-aloud expressed by the majority of the respondents:

> Interviewer: What is it you're hoping your youngsters will get out of reading aloud to them?
>
> 3rd Grade Teacher: I want them to like reading. I want them to look at a book as something that's fun to do. Fun to read.

## Guided Reading of Full-Length Literature

As noted earlier, teaching reading skills through full-length literature with an entire class (or reading group), each with a copy of the same book, is referred to in this study as "guided" reading (this form of reading is sometimes referred to as "shared" or "directed" reading). Of the 61 teachers interviewed in this study, 33 engaged in some form of guided reading activities with literature (31 used full-length literature, 2 used extracts only). The 28 teachers who said they did no guided reading with literature represent teachers and specialists across all grade levels and across all but one of the schools. Six of these teachers reported that they would like to be doing guided reading, but for one reason or another (e.g., not enough books, not enough time, worried about detracting from skills instruction) were not engaged in this activity.

In none of the six schools was there a requirement that full-length literature be taught in a guided fashion; however, one school had a list of titles (and multiple copies of these books) from which teachers could choose for guided reading activities. Another school had also compiled a list of titles, with accompanying multiple copies, organized by grade level. A third school offered teachers book titles not only by grade level but also by "theme" (e.g., Kids Like Us, Westward Ho!). In all the other schools, teachers were free to create their own guided reading, using whatever materials or strategies they felt appropriate. It is interesting to note that where literature lists were available, teachers generally engaged in some form of guided

reading with literature; in schools where teachers were left on their own to create this kind of reading, most reported doing little or no such reading.

*Selection of materials for guided reading.* There were two selection procedures noted in this study. In one case, a committee comprised of classroom teachers, specialists, supervisors, and an external consultant (a children's literature specialist) met and created a list of suitable titles either for the elementary school as a whole, or for individual grade levels. In the other case, individual teachers simply requisitioned books for use in their own classrooms. Typically, they would consult the school librarian, fellow teachers, bookstores, or professional journals and books; they would also get titles from talks given at literature workshops or conferences. Unlike the selection of read-aloud or independent titles, students appeared to have little or no say in the selection of books for guided reading. A major factor, it seems, in determining how many books were used for guided reading was the amount of money available for such purchases. Some schools had made available funds for the purchase of books separate from individual classroom budgets. In other schools where teachers had to requisition books from within their classroom budgets, the purchase of multiple copies of books had to compete with the purchase of workbooks, basal texts, materials, and supplies. It was no surprise to us that in schools with limited budgets, teachers reported having fewer books available to them for guided reading.

*Allocation of time for guided reading.* We were unable to ascertain from the teachers even a rough estimate of the minutes per day or per week they devoted to guided reading. The reason for this is that in most cases, guided reading, unlike read-aloud and independent reading, appeared not to be a regularly scheduled activity. Some teachers described how they alternated between basal reading and literature instruction, completing a unit in the basal, then doing a full-length book. Although 90 minutes daily was typically allocated to reading instruction in their classrooms, several language arts activities were taking place in that time period, and teachers were unable to tell us exactly how much time they did devote to the guided reading of full-length books within the 90-minute block. Other teachers taught full-length books at the end of the school year, after the basal reader was completed; how much time would be allocated to guided reading would depend on when the basal reader was completed: some students might complete the basal reader six weeks before the end of the year, others might not complete it at all. Some teachers assigned full-length books to be read outside of school, and used the reading class time to discuss the book's plot, characters, and vocabulary, to answer comprehension questions, and to do projects.

*Teaching strategies for guided reading.* Although teachers reported a variety of specific teaching strategies, overall their procedures closely resembled that of directed reading activities typically used in basal reader instruction (Harris & Sipay, 1985): pre-reading activities such as vocabulary instruction, activating or building background knowledge, word identification skills instruction, setting purposes for reading, followed by either silent or oral reading of the text, then a discussion stage (posing questions to students about what had been read, re-reading passages orally), and finally post-reading activities such as written assignments or projects. None of the teachers we interviewed used commercially prepared literature guides (see Hepler, 1988) for the books they were using in guided reading instruction; it seemed to us that instead they generally relied on procedures found in basal readers. One district provided teachers with "generic" questions and follow-up activities for use in guided reading:

What problems do the characters face in this story?

Does the character change throughout this story?
What episodes lead to the climax?
What would you have done in these circumstances?
Is the setting important to the story? Why or why not?
Write an alternate ending for a chapter.
Write a sequel to the chapter or story.
Create a book cover for the book, including a summary on the flap.
Write a letter to a friend as if you were the main character.
Describe an event from the story in the first person.

Some teachers used the Junior Great Books series for their guided reading program; they followed the series' approach to generating questions for discussion and follow-up (Great Books Foundation, 1984).

The use of a basal-type directed reading strategy is demonstrated in the following extracts from the interviews, one from a 5th grade teacher, the other from a reading specialist:

Interviewer: What teaching strategies generally do you use for these books?

5th Grade Teacher: First of all we start off at the very beginning of the year with a lot of background knowledge, for instance, I'm doing The Great Gilly Hopkins right now. We start out by talking about foster children, and I have a couple of articles that I'll read to them. They'll answer some questions about how would you feel if all of a sudden something happened to your parents, and you were placed in a foster home. They do a lot of writing at that point, too. They may come back with some other information the next day, and we spend about two or three periods talking about that. Each chapter would have some preview questions that they would answer, and we would discuss them. Any vocabulary that I think would be difficult for them, I will jot down the word and the page number, and I expect them to try to figure it out using the context, writing the word down before they ever can use a dictionary. I really work on that a lot during the year. They use the dictionary a lot, I don't know if that's good or not, but we try to get them to practice learning to use those clues instead of always running to the dictionary, because what happens, this is my idea, if they continuously stop, then they lose their comprehension, they find a word and they're looking in the dictionary and they're writing it down and they're going back to their reading, so I'm trying to get them to learn to use other strategies instead of always using a dictionary. We'll go through the vocabulary words first, and then they'll silently read for a purpose, read to find out whatever, and they have to write every one of their answers to the comprehension questions in complete sentences in paragraph form. Tell me what you found out, retell. I will sometimes not have specific questions, I will just ask them to retell, do a retelling, or certain books I'll say okay, write me a paragraph comparing Gilly's personality with another character that you just read in another book. Things like that.

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Interviewer: And, generally, what are the teaching strategies for guided reading?

Reading Teacher: Well we do vocabulary in that we present key words that they may not know, that we anticipate.

Interviewer: And those words are all taken out of the books, I presume?

Reading Teacher: Oh yes. And, we try to come up with as many and as different types of activities to get at vocabulary as possible. But it's always definitely related to the material that they're going to be reading. There are some kids who have definite word problems, and I might for instance talk about how to break the word into syllables, not very often. We maybe talk about long or short vowels, but again not very often. And many times what I do is if the words can be defined in context, I will not put a definition for that word on the chart, but just put an asterisk there and the kids know that that means that they're going to define that word when they come upon it in reading, by the way the author used it. I really do try every week, or every two weeks at the most, at least, to have the kids do a cloze passage, that I've created by xeroxing pages from the trade book that we happen to be reading, and deleting words that they should be able to put in. And the thing that made me think of that is that when we have the kids define words in context that they really support one another, and then when we give those back, we don't just say to the kids, you got 8 out of 10 right, we go over it, and we have them highlight the clues that helped them to know what the word was that they chose to put on that line. The other vocabulary activity that I might introduce, I might say to them, after you've done some silent reading, I want you to do a retelling, incorporating as many of these words into your retelling as possible, to get them to use those words, not just as a one shot deal.

Interviewer: What about the teaching of comprehension?

Reading Teacher: Okay, we go about that in various and sundry ways, the cloze procedure is one method that we all use. We try very hard to get the kids to generate questions as they're reading, as we also do in their independent reading, and to make predictions. Unless kids really need it, we don't really concentrate on literal interpretations. We see that by the retellings that they do. Usually, we generate some comprehension questions along with the kids, and write them on the chart, to give the kids something to look for, as they're reading silently. And all of the reading, and I stress all of the reading that they do with us is done silently. We do not have students read aloud. Unless it's to substantiate something that they've said, where did you find something that would help you, and then they read it back to us. We never ask them to read aloud. Most of them feel very uncomfortable doing that. Although for some strange reason, when we get substitutes they think that the kids are supposed to read this aloud, and you read, and then you read, and then you read. It's all done silently, and then they may go back to answer their own questions, or to generate more prediction or questions.

A fourth grade teacher, however, demonstrated an approach to guided reading that seemed to have a more "literary" emphasis:

Interviewer: Tell me what you do.

4th Grade Teacher: I will introduce the book. Depending on the book, for example

James and the Giant Peach, I talk about adventure. And animal characterization, and how an author will give an animal human characteristics, and with a particular book we do compare, do you know anybody that could be the ladybug? Do you know a person, a relative or whatever that is similar, has the same character traits? I talk about adventure, and how it follows a path. It starts somewhere, and if you know you're going on an adventure, you know that you have an ending somewhere. And what do you think of the title? What kind of adventure could you have with a peach? I found this year that none of the kids were familiar at all with the book, which is really neat. I mean generally you'll have one or two that will say, oh, I know what happens. So, a lot of prediction, to get them to read. and I try to stop my reading assignments at a point where they don't want to stop. And to just give some anticipation, did you want to stop? What do you think is going to happen? Again I do an awful lot with inference and prediction, and talk about vocabulary. I do all my what is an adjective, what is an adverb, and so forth. It's all pulled from the particular book that I'm using, in fact I do it with every book. And I talk about sentence structure. And how an author will vary the sentence structure, and when they do it, what is he or she telling us. And then turn it around, can you do that, can you write a paragraph like this. You know, modeling. Then I pull the writing into that, so that if the author has written it this way, do you think it will be better written another way, could you rewrite it, or if you write something the same, model this, and use the same technique that the author did.

Interviewer: Because you've done a number of these pre-reading activities, is the basic format that children then read and then you discuss or how does it go on a day to day basis, after you've got into the book?

4th Grade Teacher: After we're in the book, often times their pre-reading assignment before they come up to reading group, might be to read this chapter, and pick a selection out of this chapter that shows this--the skill that we worked on yesterday. And come up and be ready to read that, and we'll talk about it. If it's a lot of dialogue in a particular chapter or two, then their pre-reading, their pre-group assignment, will be you go out in the hall and read it together, you know you're the ladybug, you're the glowworm. That might be their pre-reading assignment before they come up to group. Or I might pair them up. And say I want you, as you're reading aloud together, one's going to read and the other's going to listen for really colorful words, really descriptive adjectives.

*What teachers expect children to gain from guided reading.* Unlike their expectations for read-aloud and independent reading, teachers seemed primarily interested in using guided reading of full-length books for teaching reading skills (e.g., vocabulary, comprehension) and (in a few cases) literary knowledge (e.g., character development, style, plot, underlying theme), balanced heavily in favor of the former. Even those teachers who talked about the development of literary skills through guided reading stayed close to a traditional "basal" definition of literary knowledge (e.g., knowledge of settings, characters, plot, metaphor, simile, use of flashbacks). We heard little in the interviews about teachers treating guided reading as an opportunity for encouraging literary responses that take into account the reader, the literary work, and the situation of reading (Purves & Beach, 1972; Rosenblatt, 1978); it is as though guided reading of full-length literature is largely a substitute for the study of passages in a basal reader--the goal being the acquisition of reading skills.

Independent Reading

We asked the teachers several questions about independent reading, which we defined as students' silent reading of written material on their own (i.e., unaided by the classroom teacher or specialist). We asked them about how books were selected for independent reading, what titles had been selected so far this year, how much time was allocated for independent reading in school, what teaching strategies were used, how children were expected to respond, and what they hoped children would gain from independent reading.

At the outset, it should be noted that 52 out of the 61 classroom teachers/specialists interviewed had their students read material independently, in school or at home, or both. Independent reading appeared to be an activity that was highly valued by the teachers in this study. Of the six that did not have independent reading, two were 3rd grade teachers, one was a Kindergarten teacher, one was a reading specialist, and two were Resource Room specialists. The specialists claimed that they were not able to fit any independent reading into their (typically) half-hour classes. One 3rd grade teacher reported that she had done independent reading in past years, but that her present class was too immature to handle individual activities such as independent reading. Another 3rd grade teacher discussed her reasons as follows:

> Interviewer: Is there a part of your program that either encourages your students or requires them to read on their own?
>
> 3rd Grade Teacher: I guess I have to say no. Some of them go special places, the more highly able students go to project Chase, that's what they call it, and those students are some of the ones who really read on their own. And I think encouragement comes from that for them.
>
> Interviewer: Which reading group have you got?
>
> 3rd Grade Teacher: I have the lowest one this year. That made a big difference in what I did.

*Selection of materials for independent reading.* In almost all cases, independent reading comprised the reading of full-length books. There were a few teachers who said that their students were free to choose any material they wished, including magazines, newspapers, telephone books, even a dictionary. According to the teachers, even in these classrooms the bulk of the material actually read was full-length books.

Most books chosen for independent reading were selected by the students themselves. A second grade teacher summed up the approach taken by most respondents:

> Interviewer: How do you select books for independent reading, or don't you?
>
> 2nd Grade Teacher: I don't. Unless they are the books I bring into the classroom, and they want to read them.
>
> Interviewer: So they aren't reading from a selection of books, they're reading anything

they want to read?

2nd Grade Teacher: That's right.

Some teachers allowed children free choice of the materials that were available, either from the classroom library, or from the school library, or from home:

Interviewer: How do the books get selected for independent reading?

2nd Grade Teacher: They select them themselves. The children select their own. We have ordered some. I have dragged the books out of my son's bookcase. That's probably our biggest problem getting things started, I think that's why I didn't start until February, because I just was having a tough time. We have a bookcase full of books over there, but they're old and ripped and some of them are just totally not interesting at all. So we needed to order some new books, and we needed to drag some in that we felt would be interesting to the kids, plus get some paperbacks from the library.

Interviewer: So am I right in thinking that they're selecting their own but they're selecting them from the ones that you've made available?

2nd Grade Teacher: Or they can go to the library. They can bring them in from home. If it's a book that they're interested in, they can read it. We have Berenstain's Bears that they've brought in. Also we've asked if they have ones at home that they'd like to donate to the classroom library for readers' workshop, and we've had many children bring those in.

In many cases, teachers reserved the right to approve student choices, based on such criteria as level of difficulty (either guiding students toward easier books, or towards harder books), or literary merit:

Interviewer: Who selects the books for independent reading?

1st/2nd Grade Teacher: We have separate options to choose from in terms of their own independent reading. They have their library choices from the library. I do come down with them for their library choices. I try to guide them in terms of books that they will feel success with, appropriate reading. We also have our classroom library.

Interviewer: Are there criteria you use for appropriateness, like a readability formula?

1st/2nd Grade Teacher: I like to take a look at the print. As you know, you cannot always depend upon parents reading aloud to their own children. Some children like to choose the great big factual books, which are fine every once in a while, but then they have a tendency to return them very quickly. So I try to guide them more toward something that is appropriate for them. That they can feel some success with in reading.

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Interviewer: How are the books selected for independent reading?

4th Grade Teacher: I am developing a library. When I came to this classroom there was nothing. Except these horrible old books, that I'd probably give away. I'm developing a library. I have out of my own pocket probably bought a hundred books, which I keep with me, and let the kids borrow. I have started that, it is not complete. We belong to a book club, so we do that, once a month they get Troll books. I also get a lot of my books donated, then we have a book fair here twice a year, so we encourage them to do that. We have a wonderful library, they all seem to want to take out a book at the library. I have some kids here who are avid readers, and some that are less than avid. Parents are very cooperative. That was a requirement, the first day of school, I sent home a newsletter, and we talked about it in class, and they had to have pens and ruler, and had to have a book, and parents have been cooperative. The child always has to have a book.

Interviewer: In terms of selecting books, do you rely on lists or other sources, or is it a wide open choice?

4th Grade Teacher: Wide open, and I usually can steer kids, cause I'm familiar enough with titles for kids, and I find out what they like, and I know books that the girls would love, like the Anastasia Krupnik series, I know the girls will like those, and it's usually word of mouth anyway. And the boys are a little tougher, but I have several sports fiction, as well as non-fiction, that's what I do. I have lots of book lists, but I find that there's a lot of junk on them.

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Interviewer: Do the students read on their own?

5th Grade Teacher: Yes. Well they're required to read 20 books a year. We try to enforce that. I think if you make reading exciting, kids really do want to reach that goal. I allow them to use books that we read in class, not that I read, but ones they read in their reading group. As far as them selecting, a lot of times they find the different things that they're interested in.

Interviewer: So the choice actually is the students', not yours?

5th Grade Teacher: It's a little directed by me. For certain students. But for other students, and I'm not sure they're aware of that. But I do direct certain children in a certain area.

Interviewer: What would make you seek out some titles for a particular kid and leave others alone?

5th Grade Teacher: If they don't enjoy reading, and I want to make sure that they find something that they're comfortable with at their level. They're not just going to pick a book up and try to read the first chapter and get discouraged. I find something that they're going to like, that they're going to pursue. Because I think that's very important for children that have difficulty reading. If you just left them on their own, I think they'd get more frustrated. So I may find books for them, and I have a library in my room, and I know titles which child will be successful with. Well I really like that book,

well why don't you try that and see what you think. We read Trouble River and Save Queen of Sheba, and that really turns kids on, and then they look for other titles that deal with that time period, or they like historical fiction. Then we'll direct it that way.

Some teachers allowed free choice of books from within a pool chosen by the teacher (i.e., students choose what they wish from a list of books). An occasional teacher assigned some specific titles for independent reading, where the primary purpose of the assignment was to write a book report. No teachers in this study assigned every book that students were to read independently.

*Titles selected for Independent Reading.* We were unable to compile a list of books and other reading materials selected either by teachers or by students for independent reading, in part because most independent reading was self-selected, and in part because neither teachers nor students kept track of the titles read independently. Even in schools where students chose their independent reading from lists provided by teachers, or from classroom libraries, few records were kept of which students were reading which titles. Some schools were participating in independent reading programs such as "Book-It" (an independent reading project sponsored by Pizza Hut) and "PARP--Parents As Reading Partners" (a home-reading project sponsored by the New York State Legislature): however, only tallies of the total number of books read were made, and so we were unable to gain access to the actual titles read in either of these programs. Several teachers shared with us titles of books that were, at the time of the interviews, quite popular as independent reading: specific titles such as Iggy's House, Return of the Indian in the Cupboard, Guinness Book of World Records, series books such as Sweet Valley Twins, Dr. Seuss, Clifford The Big Red Dog, books by Patricia Reilly Giff, Judy Blume, Beverly Cleary, John Peterson, Louis Lowry; books about cartoon characters (e.g., Rainbow Brite), Dinosaur books. From the interviews, we concluded that most of the reading material read independently is popular contemporary realistic fiction; this is to be expected given most teachers' stated aims for independent reading, namely that students should choose their own reading material.

*Time allocated to independent reading.* We asked teachers how much time they allocated to independent reading; from their responses, it is clear that some teachers expect independent reading to take place in school, others expect it to be done at home, while a few encourage it in school and at home. A breakdown of allocated time for independent reading is presented in Appendix A, Table 3. From this table, it will be seen that an average of 14 minutes are allocated daily in school for independent reading. Most teachers allocated specific blocks of time for independent reading, a few expected independent reading to take place in between other activities, for example after students had finished their required work:

Interviewer: How much time is allocated and where is that time given for independent reading?

1st/2nd Grade Teacher: Independent reading is encouraged, it's also given as option in the morning after your independent work is done. We have our silent designated reading time during the day. And even after completion of math, if you don't wish to use the computer, or things like that.

Interviewer: How much time is that a day?

1st/2nd Grade Teacher: Right now we're spending 25 minutes.

Interviewer: Are you religious about that?

1st/2nd Grade Teacher: Yes.

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Interviewer: Do you have a separate independent reading program in the class itself?

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: Not as an organized program.

Interviewer: Are there any other times of the day that are not organized that you encourage the students to read, like after their work is done?

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: Sure. When their independent work is done, I always say, "It's a good time to read."

Interviewer: Do you get a sense of how much time actually ends up being available to children for doing that, say on a daily basis?

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: Of course it varies with the child. I have some that probably have half an hour, forty-five minutes to read. Then there are others that never get their assignments done, so they never get to that point of the day.

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Interviewer: Do you have an independent reading activity or time period in the classroom?

2nd Grade Teacher: Uninterrupted sustained silent reading time we have frequently during the week. I call it free reading, and it's a good 20 minute block, where we all are reading quietly, reading at our seats. Their choice, their selection.

Interviewer: You don't indicate--

2nd Grade Teacher: Not one thing, just go over and make a selection, usually they take two or three books back to their seat, and the next 20 minutes is spent, just all of us reading.

Interviewer: When you said 20 minutes, is that three times a week, or something like that?

2nd Grade Teacher: Yes, one time in particular is good, when they come back from the library, they come back staggered, we don't always come back as one class. Depending on how check out of the books is going, we come right in from library time, right to a good 20 - 25 minute period of just reading in our rooms.

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3rd/4th Grade Teacher: We try to introduce them to as many books as we can, as many authors as we can, and we are trying to get them to want to read. And to enjoy reading. We have silent reading time every day, that we call DEAR (Drop Everything and Read). The read-aloud is a way of showing them different books that they might be interested in reading during that silent reading time. We have an expectation that they will read each night at home silently also. So it's another way of introducing a book that they might want to read, because often times the students then will go to the library and get a copy of that book that we're reading. They'll even have it and they'll follow along.

Interviewer: Tell me what happens in the DEAR program.

3rd/4th Grade Teacher: Every day when they come back from lunch, we aim for 15 to 20 minutes. We try to increase it as the year goes on. We have a couch, we have a tub filled with pillows. We do this once every day, they have their own DEAR pillow. And they work with the art teacher here. We have parents come in and help them stuff and sew the pillows. We have carpeting here, we're real fortunate, we have a lovely facility, so they lay on the floor, or they sit in a chair, or they sit wherever they want to. They get ready, I set the timer, they read. I read with them. We have a special intermediate education class that also comes in at that time, and that teacher also reads, so there's modeling there.

Of the 61 teachers interviewed, 4 reported that the only independent reading their students were assigned was to to be done at home; of the four, two were specialists, who do not see their students on a daily basis. The independent reading was assigned for the days the students were not meeting with the specialist. The other two were classroom teachers at 2nd and 6th grade. The 2nd grade teacher explained:

Interviewer: How much time do you allocate for independent reading in school?

2nd Grade Teacher: I don't allocate anything. If they finish their work, the books are there for them to read. When they come in in the morning they can get a book before school starts if they like. I encourage them to do so. But as far as really allocating time, I don't allocate any time.

Interviewer: You don't have an uninterrupted sustained reading period, or whatever this district calls that particular activity?

2nd Grade Teacher: Not at my grade level. The only thing I do is when the library does designate those type of days, I encourage the children to bring in books or to read one of the books in our room, but I can't find time to do that type of thing in my schedule. Our schedules are really overloaded.

Interviewer: So the expectation is that they will read basically outside of school?

2nd Grade Teacher: Yes. Although I do notice that occasionally the children have books on their desks in order to put their name on the chart, their x on the chart saying that they have read a book, and some of them will leave the book on the desk, and from time to time pick it up and try to complete in between various times.

The sixth grade teacher justified his approach as follows:

Interviewer: Do you do independent reading in your classroom?

6th Grade Teacher: I don't do it inside the classroom. I require them to do a book review about every six, seven or maybe eight weeks. I don't have them roll them off one after another. And very seldom will I ever let them read just for the sake of reading in the classroom. Unless they've happened to finish their work and they have a library book. But I don't assign a particular day for free reading. I do know that some teachers do do that. Like every Friday is considered free reading. And so what I find out after teaching for 23 years, they race off to the library, they come back with a book, and then the book goes back on the library shelf, and they've had it for the hour. I'm saying that for some of them. I'm not saying it for the majority, but I just don't like that idea. I would rather see reading become a little more spontaneous, than making it a real job, or making it a real effort. So, I give them particular requirements but I don't give them a lot of free time to sit there and fulfill that obligation. I would rather them do that at home. However, if they are sitting there and reading as many children do do, that's fine, they can continue to do that type of reading.

*Teaching strategies for independent reading.* Most teachers felt it unnecessary to engage in any kind of instruction, other than to provide students with either the time or the encouragement for independent reading. For those teachers who did describe specific teaching strategies, most reported one or more of the following approaches: (1) teacher reads silently as a model for students, reading either children's literature or their own professional reading material; (2) teacher "sells" books by describing them; and (3) teacher guides students in the selection of books:

Interviewer: Are you doing any teaching during the independent reading time?

2nd Grade Teacher: I'm reading.

Interviewer: I'm curious. Are you reading a book that might appeal to second graders, or are you reading your own material?

2nd Grade Teacher: I read both. When some new Indian literature books came in, I had ordered, which were on a second grade level, I was reading those. Sometimes I'm reading, our principal passes around reading to be read by the staff for staff development, publications, and sometimes I'm reading that. So it's a combination.

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Interviewer: Now in terms of your teaching strategies, what do you do either to get kids into this reading, to maintain the activity, or to follow up afterwards?

5th Grade Teacher: At the beginning of the year I do book talks. But I only do that at the beginning of the year. Every summer I try to read about 15 new children's books. I still don't keep up with it, but what I will do is I'll hear something, or I'll talk to somebody who's reading, and I'll say, oh did you read such and such that's really good. I may pick it up and read it and then I'll share it with the class. I'll say, oh boy, I just read a good book. Danny, Champion of the World has taken me four or five years to get around to. I finally read it and I shared it, and I said, oh this is a really good book. The kids had never read it and they hadn't heard of it. They come up to the library for half an hour every week, and I spend that time walking around with them. Sharing some books that I know, things that they might like, but that's all that I do.

*Testing and responding to independent reading.* Most teachers said they had follow-up activities for independent reading, but only one or two teachers assessed independent reading by assigning grades. In cases where grades were assigned, they were based almost exclusively on book reports; however, no teachers claimed to have book reports as the only follow-up activity. In fact, these teachers were at pains to describe the variety of book report formats they used in their classrooms (e.g., acting out an incident from the book, making a diorama, designing a book jacket or poster). Amongst other teachers (primarily from one school district) a variety of techniques for encouraging students' responses to independent reading were noted, such as reading journals or logs, sharing the book aloud with the class, writing activities, projects, and book conferences. Five teachers insisted that no responses be sought from students after independent reading; for them, such follow-up activities would detract from the goal of independent reading, namely that it should be done for enjoyment and pleasure alone. Examples of book reports and their variants were numerous:

Interviewer: Is there any kind of testing or expected response when students finish reading a book on their own?

5th Grade Teacher: Normally they have four book reports to do, during the course of the year. Usually a mystery story, and fiction, and fantasy.

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6th Grade Teacher: So, I give them particular requirements but I don't give them a lot of free time to sit there and fulfill that obligation. I would rather them do that at home. However, if they are sitting there and reading as many children do do, that's fine, they can continue to do that type of reading. But I also like them, when I have them do this type of reading, complete a book review, I always call it a review, and there's a particular format that I'm interested in, and I'm really more interested in the reaction to the book, than to the content. I would like to be able to have them have a rather good feeling after reading the book, or the book was probably not the best book that I've read. But I would like them to be able to come back and tell me why they felt the book was exceptional, or why the book wasn't exceptional. As I tell them, William Safire writes an article every Sunday in the Times. I always read it. I always don't understand it. And I wish that I did. But the reason why I keep reading it, because I hope that one day, I could read a complete article by Safire, and really understand it.

A second grade teacher explained the technique of "reading journals" that accompanied the independent reading:

Interviewer: And then they do the silent reading.

2nd Grade Teacher: Yes, after the mini-lesson then they get their journals and their books and they do silent reading for 20 or 25 minutes.

Interviewer: And what do you do?

2nd Grade Teacher: I walk around the room, and meet with children. I work on a chart. I have a chart that I check a couple of times a week, just kind of eyeball the whole group, who's engaged in reading, who's not engaged in reading. I walk around, I do running records with the children. Certain children I want to see I try to get a running record in every two to three weeks.

Interviewer: And then the children are doing reading journals, right?

2nd Grade Teacher: They're responding in their journal. After they've read for the 20 - 25 minutes they might respond in their journal. They might write, or they might sit for five minutes, what I have them do is think for five minutes what they're going to share today. In other words they're responding but thinking in their own head what they're going to share, they know they're going to share with a partner or a group of three or four, I want them to think ahead of time what they would like to share with that person.

Interviewer: Are those separate? Responding in the journals is one activity, and then sharing with a partner or a group is another activity?

2nd Grade Teacher: Yes.

Interviewer: Now the five minutes thinking, is that related to the sharing?

2nd Grade Teacher: Yes it is.

Interviewer: And then they also chart, is that part of the reading journal, or is that separate from it? You said that's where they responded and said whether the book was easy, medium or hard.

2nd Grade Teacher: Oh that's the chart, they have that in the back of their journal, and they do that when they finish a book.

A third grade teacher showed how she runs a "book conference" during independent reading, using an approach similar to Veatch's (1968) to teach reading skills:

Interviewer: Now if I were to watch you with a given child, tell me about the things that would go on when you were sitting down next to a child.

3rd Grade Teacher: Probably I'd start by asking him or her about what she was reading. I might ask why did you choose this? I would ask them how they regard the book. Do they think that it's an easy book for them, a just right book for them, or a hard book for them. And I would ask them to read for me, to read out loud for me. And I would listen to them read.

Interviewer: Why are you asking them to read aloud?

3rd Grade Teacher: I need to know what skills they don't have. If there are some phonetic things I need to be teaching. I believe, I think that children need to be taught some skills and if I listen and I am hearing this kid constantly pronounce a "ck" or "ur," then I think I need to teach that skill to that child, probably in a group, or I might do it right then. I tend not to do it then, because I tend not to want to interrupt that reading.

Interviewer: Do you keep notes?

3rd Grade Teacher: I keep a note card on them.

Interviewer: All right, so they read aloud to you and you're listening, is there anything else that you do in that conference?

3rd Grade Teacher: I might discuss the book with them, again depending on the reader. Because there are children who are very, very good word callers, and I think maybe what I'd like to get at is comprehension, maybe interpretation. So I might just discuss the book with them.

A sixth grade teacher demonstrated her approach to a "book conference," in which she focuses less on reading skills and more on literary understanding:

Interviewer: And then after they have read their book, they discuss it with you?

6th Grade Teacher: They show it to me, for me to check the reading level. I approve it, they read it, when they're finished then they report on it either in a private conference with me, or in a book report. Within the marking period, the minimum number of books to be read in ten weeks is four books, and they have to do two conferences and two book reports. And then after that if they do any more books, if they're working for an above average or outstanding (grade), then they have to do extra book reports. I also have a list of something called "55 ways to report on a book other than a book report," and I encourage them to do something from that list, make a diorama, or one child did a wonderful one this year of taking a Roald Dahl--first of all she had been in a Roald Dahl play. She knew how the play was extrapolated from the book, so she took another story of his, took out the dialogue and dramatized the scene and put on a play. She got credit for that.

Interviewer: Obviously you've just said there are exceptions, but tell me about the way that you run a conference and the way that the book reports are done.

6th Grade Teacher: I have a book report form which is a standard book report form,

and on the summary I want six to ten sentences. I don't want them going on and on. I'm trying to have them develop the facility to tell me the main things in the story, the main idea, without including all the details, and I see a big problem with sixth graders being able to do this. They put in too much detail, and have a lot of trouble separating the unimportant from the important. So that's one goal. Then, they have to give an opinion of the book, and it can't be "It was good." It has to be, "I enjoyed reading this book on baseball because I'm a baseball fan. I went to the World Series." You know it has to be a substantial reason, I don't accept it unless it is a substantial reason, and they're very good about that. Then they have to make a recommendation to another person, and it could be, "I recommend this book to anyone who likes sports because...," or to a specific person because she owns a horse and might like to get more information about how to take care of the horse, whatever. And then the conference, it's almost always one student and me, but once in a while two students read the same book at the same time, and then the three of us would discuss it.

Interviewer: What do you do in the conference?

6th Grade Teacher: I ask them to tell the plot of the book to me briefly. Then I ask them questions about characterization, setting, plot, mood, author's purpose. If it were realistic fiction, I'd ask them if they could imagine that going on, the situation going on in their own life. Do you think you would feel the way the main character does if such and such happened to you? The child has just been through a divorce and reads a book on divorce, and has shared that with me. It's so individualized what I would say, it's a private conversation. I wouldn't say the same thing if there were two children, but as I say there rarely are. And then after they discuss it with me, I give them a follow-up. It might be a follow-up connected with the setting of the books. If the book is set in Colorado, I have a list of 800 numbers for all the states, and I have them call up the 800 number to the state of Colorado and get material on it, and the State sends it back, and then the student either writes a report on Colorado or much more likely I'll have them plan a trip to Colorado and keep track of their expenses, their mileage, their activities while there. I try to get some social studies skills in there with map reading, and distance, it depends on the child, and how much the child can do. One child just was doing a biography and there was a character in there who had to do with the Korean War so I had him look up the Korean War and find out ten facts about the war. At the beginning of the year I also teach them in social studies class how to do a correct bibliography, and I'm really a stickler for this. They have to have their source cited correctly on their paper or I won't take it. So they cite their source. If a child read Justin Morgan Had a Horse, I would probably assign a report on the Morgan Horse, using one of our teachers (she is an expert on the Morgan Horse) and I want them to understand how to get information from a person, not just in the encyclopedia. I really make an effort not to have them using the encyclopedia all the time. So I have them write questions, get a tape recorder, make an appointment with the music teacher, sit down, take her response, write up the interview, those are the examples.

In terms of follow-up activities, two teachers at second and fourth grade, respectively, represented the views of most respondents:

Interviewer: Are there any follow-up activities?

2nd Grade Teacher: Occasionally they will tell me about a good book they have read.

Interviewer: But you don't insist that they talk to you about the books they have read?

2nd Grade Teacher: No. That goes along with my theory about just enjoy the book for what it is. And everybody enjoys different things. I don't feel that I should push my ideas upon the children as far as enjoying the books.

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Interviewer: Do you have any follow-up activities for independent reading?

4th Grade Teacher: Occasional book reports, but basically I really don't want it to be work. I think that's the mistake we make, we get into that, and then it becomes a school project. I want them to just read because it's fun, not because if they hand in 12 book reports they get something or other. It's really hard to make yourself stay away from that, but I've tried to.

*What teachers expected children to gain from independent reading.* We inquired from teachers what they hoped children would gain from reading independently. As with read-aloud, teachers said their goal primarily was to have children enjoy reading. Several teachers also talked about the development of vocabulary and critical reading skills through independent reading:

Interviewer: What do you think the outcome might be in terms of student reading development from having done this individualized reading?

1st Grade Teacher: Hopefully it will make them want to read more on their own at home. It will help them to develop better vocabulary. Just learn that reading can be fun. Like try not to make anything happen afterwards. At home many times I'm reading just for enjoyment, and let them know that they can read for enjoyment too.

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4th Grade Teacher: Just so that they would get an enjoyment out of it, and to increase their vocabulary. Same thing basically why I read to them. To look at various styles that they're reading.

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Interviewer: What would you expect or perceive as an outcome of independent reading?

6th Grade Teacher: Well, I want them to become a little bit more critical in reading, to be able to read something, and to be able to discuss and to be able to get a real feeling or try to understand what is the author trying to present in this book, to get the feeling that the author is trying to present something, and I hope that that comes out. I also hope that they can build some knowledge from content. I also hope that maybe a particular style that they particularly enjoy, and maybe they don't know that it's style,

but possibly the style can be transferred to their own writing techniques. I guess that's it.

Use of Libraries

It seems appropriate to assume that school libraries play an important role in the use of literature in the elementary school. We therefore asked teachers and school librarians about how they and their students used the school library. From their responses, some clear patterns emerge: almost all the students had regularly scheduled library periods, half an hour, one day a week. These 30 minute periods typically were divided into two major activities, library skills instruction and book selection. Some librarians used part of their period, especially with younger students, for reading aloud. Library skills instruction consisted mainly of activities designed to teach students how to use the library (e.g., card or computer catalog system, how to sign out and return books, location and use of reference materials, use of various media such as filmstrips, tapes, and microfiche). Book selection consisted primarily of students returning books previously borrowed, browsing the shelves, selecting books they wanted, and signing them out. The amount of guidance provided in selecting books varied from school to school. In most of the schools, teachers did not accompany their students to the library, and in these cases the librarian (or aide, where there was no librarian) would offer such assistance as was possible, given that the librarian or aide was also engaged in checking out the books. In one school, where the teachers accompanied the students to the library, the teachers attended to the checking out and returning of books while the library staff offered guidance. In general, we sensed that students were not given much assistance with book selection during these regularly-scheduled library class periods. If this were indeed the case, it appeared to stem more from teachers and librarians being too busy with book check-out procedures than from a lack of interest in assisting students with their book selection.

In addition to the regularly scheduled library periods, most school libraries had "open" times (when no classes were scheduled) for students and teachers to use the library for their own purposes. During these periods, according to the librarians we interviewed, students did receive much assistance with book selection. In one school, the library was specifically open first thing in the morning so that students could use the library on their way to class; in another, students and teachers could use the library even when scheduled classes were taking place, so long as they weren't disturbing the classes. However, in most schools, such an arrangement would not be possible because of the lack of library staff.

Several teachers talked about how they viewed the school librarian as an expert on children's literature who could be relied upon to assist them in the design of their classroom literature teaching. If they were doing a theme, say, on whales, they could call upon the school librarian to both recommend appropriate titles and supply copies of books. This seemed to match several librarians' view of their role, namely an invaluable resource for children's literature, and a person who should be jointly planning literature-based instruction with the classroom teacher. In general, however, the roles of the school librarian and the classroom teachers in the teaching of literature do not appear to be well defined, nor do the literature activities seem to be well coordinated between the two settings. Several librarians attributed the lack of coordination to the fact that they were not included in the planning of the 'core' curriculum:

Interviewer: How do you view the different roles of teachers and librarians?

Librarian: I don't think I know an awful lot about what does or doesn't go on in the classroom. We're a little bit isolated up here. We don't get in the classrooms unless we're invited. And it becomes a question of not really knowing what goes on in the classroom.

Interviewer: So if classroom teachers want to run a literature program completely separate from the library, they are completely free to do so?

Librarian: Yes. And I think most of them do.

In some schools, full-length books are being read in both the classroom and the library at the same time; in others, two separate independent reading programs are taking place in the two settings. Library skills are often taught in both the regular classroom (as part of a basal reader) and in the library, without either the classroom teacher or the librarian necessarily being aware of what the other is doing.

This situation raises the issue of defining the roles of both classroom teachers and librarians with respect to the use of literature. Several librarians expressed an interest in teaching literature in coordination with classroom teachers rather than simply providing it for them; at the same time, several classroom teachers said that they regretted that the approaches to literature in both classroom and school library were not more closely and collaboratively planned. Both librarians and classroom teachers reported that both time constraints and a lack of knowledge of each other's programs contributed to the situation. Nonetheless, classroom teachers reported building private libraries in their classrooms, while librarians said they were actively engaged in the teaching of literature. Although both teachers and librarians in our study expressed the need to coordinate their programs, we nonetheless detected a sense of competition and territoriality between classroom and library.

## Good and Poor Readers

With respect to better and poorer readers, we asked respondents whether there were differences in how they selected books, how they allocated time, how they taught, and how they expected them to respond.

In terms of book selection, we concluded from the interviews that the better readers were generally encouraged to read anything they wanted, including "harder" and more challenging books, while the poor readers who were allowed to read books were generally advised to pick "easier" titles:

Interviewer: Are there different books that are being selected for the better versus the poorer readers?

1st Grade Teacher: My top kids will pick books that are on a higher reading level. My low group, they're not even there for the children to pick from. Then they'll go over to this table and pick books that are at their readability level.

Interviewer: Do you find that you have to direct them?

1st Grade Teacher: Yes, I do have to direct them.

Interviewer: So they are reading easier books then?

1st Grade Teacher: Right. Things that they can find success at.

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Interviewer: Is there any differentiation between book selection for good and poor readers?

4th Grade Teacher: I try to be familiar with reading levels, so I try to direct the children, the less capable the readers, to books that are less sophisticated both in concept as well as language. But I do also try to stretch them a little. I don't let them pick out first grade readers. I know authors that write for children who are not quite as capable. And I direct them to those authors.

Other teachers stressed the importance of selecting books that would be of interest to poorer readers, even though they might not represent 'good' literature:

Interviewer: What would be some of the factors you might consider in selecting literature for your lower readers?

3rd Grade Teacher: Well one of the things has to be the vocabulary, the readability for the child. In other words, some of the stories are marvelous to listen to, but too difficult, so that would be one thing. I guess with the lower reader, I tend to pick stories that they are interested in, and if I am able to find good literature that fits that criterion, I will, if I can't, I will settle for something that maybe is not quite as good. With the slower reader, the main thing that I do is pick something that I know that they're going to be interested in. Because, when they're interested, even though they're having difficulty, they're more inclined to stick with it and read. Interest is the main thing.

When teachers were asked what they meant by "easier" books, they typically defined them in terms of simpler vocabulary and lower readability. This seems to be consistent with the philosophy that reading literature should be done for pleasure and enjoyment; books that might frustrate or discourage poorer readers are to be avoided. It is also consistent with the view that poorer readers may not possess sufficient reading skills to be able to read books on their own.

Another difference between better and poorer readers lies in the amount of time made available to them for independent reading in school. While teachers frequently said that all students were given similar time periods for independent reading (e.g., in a Drop Everything And Read program), they also revealed that better readers are frequently able to continue this reading after seatwork has been completed. Poor readers, by virtue of their inability to complete seatwork in the time allotted, are often denied these additional opportunities for extended reading. In one school, however, the program was set up in such a way that the poor readers actually spent more time than the better readers engaged in independent reading. Their

program included 30 minutes a day (four times a week) of extended reading over and above the reading included in the regular classroom; in this program, students also read independently for homework. From the interviews, it appears that good readers generally had greater access to and time made available for the reading of literature in school than poor readers, with one exception--being read to. In almost all classrooms, read-aloud activities were done with entire classes.

In terms of instructional strategies, we need to separate guided reading instruction from independent and read-aloud. In both independent and read-aloud, teachers reported few differences in their teaching strategies, other than those noted above in the selection of books. In fact, both good and poor readers always shared in the same read-aloud activities (in part because read-aloud activities generally occurred in homerooms, where all students would be present). On the other hand, poorer readers were less likely to be offered guided reading instruction using full-length literature, in part because guided reading instruction, unlike independent and read-aloud, was organized within reading groups, not as a whole class activity. During these reading periods, the low reading groups typically were instructed through a basal reader. Teachers felt that poor readers were already "behind schedule" in the basal series so they could not afford to take much time out to read books. Even when they did so, the books had to be sufficiently easy in content and readability level so as not to frustrate the poorer reader. Teachers who commented on their instructional strategies said their pace of instruction was noticeably slower for the poorer readers, and it was also more "guided" and "structured" in comparison to the teaching of better readers. For example, a 4th/5th grade teacher reported that he had his poorer readers do more oral reading; he would ask them questions after every paragraph they read. He emphasized that these questions focused on skills such as recognizing details and sequencing, less on interpretation. In fact, he expected the poorest readers to respond with factual, detailed answers; from his best readers, however, he expected interpretations, predictions, and inferences.

Overall, the prevailing philosophy that appears to guide most of the teachers with respect to poor readers is that (1) poorer readers should participate fully in being read to, and in reading on their own, provided that they choose books for independent reading that are "at their level"; (2) poorer readers are not sufficiently 'on schedule' in their reading development to use full-length guided reading of literature instead of their basal reader, as the better readers are; and (3) where guided reading of full-length literature was undertaken with poorer readers, accommodations needed to be made in teaching strategies (e.g., more structure, more teacher direction, slower pace) and in expectations (e.g., be satisfied if poorer readers can comprehend literally). With some notable exceptions in one school district, the respondents appear to regard full-length literature as a major vehicle for the reading development of better readers; for poorer readers, by contrast, full-length literature (other than recreational reading in the form of read-aloud and independent reading) is something to do once the skills have been mastered.

**Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to explore the elementary antecedents of literature teaching in secondary school. We sought to learn about elementary teachers' instructional philosophies and practices in literature.

Although the schools we conducted our interviews in were drawn from urban, suburban, and rural areas, we could not detect any noticeable differences in approach to the use of literature according to the school's location alone. Nor were we able to detect any noticeable differences in the treatment of literature by grade level, other than in the specific titles used in different grade levels (even here, many of the same titles were read to students across grade levels in the same schools). From an analysis of the interviews with 74 elementary school personnel in six schools, however, we drew the following conclusions:

(1) In terms of their instructional philosophy, the elementary personnel we interviewed expressed a strong belief in the importance of literature in the elementary curriculum. However, they had difficulty articulating what they saw as the role for literature in the development of literacy abilities. From the descriptions of their practices and the reasons they gave for engaging in them, we concluded that most of the read-aloud and independent reading activities were driven by a "romantic" philosophy (Walmsley, 1981), while guided reading of literature appeared to be derived from a "literacy skills" philosophy (Walmsley, 1988);

(2) Reading aloud to students appears to be the most widely used activity for involving elementary students in literature. 95% of the teachers we interviewed read aloud to all their students (both good and poor readers), and 77% of those did so on a daily basis. The major goal of these read-aloud sessions was to nurture a love of reading and of books; reading aloud needed to be a pleasurable and enjoyable activity, without accompanying tests of vocabulary or comprehension. Books were most likely to be selected to be read aloud on the basis of their potential for giving pleasure;

(3) Having students read books independently is the second most widely used activity for involving elementary students in literature. 90% of the teachers we interviewed routinely encouraged students to read independently, providing both time and assistance to enable them to do so. Most teachers provided time in school for independent reading, and most expected independent reading would take place at home, too, even though only a handful of teachers insisted that such outside reading take place. Again, the major goal of this activity was to nurture a love of reading and of books; unlike read-aloud activities, however, independent reading was frequently to be followed up by book reports or other projects. Although most teachers did not report keeping records of the books read independently by their students, the books selected for independent reading tended to be favorites of both teachers and students, mostly current realistic fiction, but also a few tried-and-true "classics" (Charlotte's Web, Little Women);

(4) Guided reading (teaching reading or literature with an entire class using the same full-length book) is the third most widely used activity for involving elementary students in literature. 57% of the teachers we interviewed said they engaged in some form of guided reading activities, and all but two of these teachers used full-length literature to do so. A further 10% of all the teachers said they would like to engage in this kind of reading but for one reason or another (not enough books, not enough time, worried about detracting from skills instruction), did not do so. When full-length literature is used for guided reading instruction, its goal appears to be the teaching of reading skills (e.g., comprehension, vocabulary), rather than to explore literary responses or develop literary knowledge beyond such elements as setting, characters, and plot;

(5) Almost all students of the teachers we interviewed spent about half an hour a week

in the school library, receiving instruction from the library staff in library "skills" (e.g., how to use the card catalog, using reference materials), selecting and checking out books for independent reading. In most of the schools, the classroom teachers did not accompany the students to the library. In addition, most school libraries offered "open" time, during which students and teachers were free to browse, seek assistance, and check out books. Librarians also contributed to the literature program by offering teachers advice on literature selections, helping locate specific books, and coming to classrooms to do "booktalks";

(6) Poorer readers appear to be treated the same as better readers in terms of read-aloud and independent reading activities (with two exceptions--one that poorer readers are generally expected to choose independent titles at their reading level, and the other that if opportunities are given for independent reading after seatwork has been done, the poorer readers usually are unable to take advantage of this additional time). However, poorer readers rarely participate in guided reading of full-length literature, when it is offered as an option, because teachers feel they are not sufficiently advanced in their reading skills development in the basal reader. Also, poorer readers generally seem to be taken through books with more structure, more teacher direction, at a slower pace, and are expected to concentrate more on the literal understanding of what they read than are better readers.

In the introduction to this paper, we quoted Ravitch and Finn's (1987) recommendations for improving elementary schools literature programs:

> Devote more time and attention to teaching literature, beginning in the earliest grades (p. 216); that schools should strive to define the essential ingredients of a coherent literature curriculum, K-12 (p. 220); that only those who are well educated in history or literature should teach those subjects in the schools (p. 228).

In the schools in which our respondents taught, it is clear that the amount of time allocated to the teaching of literature is a very small fraction of that allocated to the teaching of reading skills, despite the importance our respondents attached to the role of literature in elementary school. The problem these teachers face is that there are too many demands being made on the limited amount of time available to language arts instruction, and the teaching of literature is not regarded yet as important enough to displace other components such as reading skills instruction. It may be that the teachers themselves regard literature as very important, but they simply are not free to devote an appropriate amount of time to it. It is also possible, given respondents' unease about the role they thought literature should be playing in the elementary curriculum, that they simply are not sure how literature is to be fitted into the traditional language arts curriculum. For some teachers, it was obvious that literature was something that they had recently "added" to the curriculum, and it existed as a separate activity, alongside other language arts instruction. For others, especially in one of the schools, their approach to teaching literature seems to have emerged as a consequence of adopting a "process-approach" to writing. If writing could be taught through genuine acts of composing on self-selected topics, why couldn't reading be taught through genuine encounters with literature, with self-chosen books? What was interesting about this school was that the traditional requirement for reading 20 books a year (and reporting on them) was left intact while the new reading program was developed. Similarly, the school's remedial reading program had already developed its own approach to reading using trade books; at the time we interviewed teachers from this district, there seemed to be two parallel and overlapping literature programs, one for the regular classrooms, another for the remedial programs. Although the schools varied considerably in

their approaches to the use of literature, in none of them did we hear of a coherent, articulated district philosophy with respect to literature's role in the language arts program, across grades, and across different levels of reading and writing ability. In none of the schools did we hear about how the elementary literature program related to the secondary literature program, i.e., what literary experiences they needed to provide students to adequately prepare them for secondary school.

We were surprised how little teachers seem to know about their students' literary experiences, or keep track of them. In contrast to the detailed record-keeping and monitoring of reading skills instruction, teachers in this study seemed to know little about which full-length books their students had read on their own. Further, teachers were generally unaware of the books their colleagues were reading to their students, or assigning to be read. As in Mendosa's (1985) study, students in the schools where our respondents taught were highly likely to have repeatedly read (or been read to) the same titles, and by accident, we suspect, not design. Unlike secondary schools, where a "canon" of literary works predominates (Applebee, 1989), no such corresponding canon seems to exist in elementary school.

When we looked at what teachers, administrators, and supervisors told us about their backgrounds, we were struck by how limited their formal training was in literature, especially in comparison to their training and background in the teaching of reading. This situation seems analogous to elementary teachers' knowledge of writing (Walmsley, 1980). Most of what our respondents knew about literature appears to have come from their own reading (either as a child, or currently as a teacher or parent), or from workshops presented locally in the area. Very few of the teachers or specialists had extensive grounding in children's literature. Given the degree programs in which the majority of the teachers gained their Bachelors or Masters--mostly Elementary Education for the classroom teachers, mostly Reading and Special Education for the Reading specialists and Special Education staff respectively, this lack of formal coursework is hardly surprising. Knowledge of children's literature, unlike reading theory and pedagogy, is not typically a requirement of elementary teacher certification; nor is knowledge of writing theory and practice. At the same time, we could not detect any consistent relationship between a respondent's formal coursework in children's literature and the extent to which they reported using literature in their classroom: in fact, it seemed that teachers who said that they themselves read a great deal were the ones who provided extensive literary experiences for their students.

On the other hand, librarians described themselves as knowledgeable about children's literature, and they were all so described by the teachers in their buildings. Part of the librarians' frustrations with current practices in literature instruction centered on their being treated more as "bibliographers" than as teachers of literature, especially in light of the contrast they saw between their own professional knowledge and that of the classroom and specialist teachers.

While our findings seem to suggest that elementary schools have yet to implement Ravitch and Finn's (1987) recommendations, they also indicate that the process of implementing them is under way. Clearly, teachers in our study were reflecting on their state of knowledge about children's literature, on how literature should be taught, and on how conceptually it fits into the broader language arts framework. Several of the schools had already begun to struggle with the issue of articulating an instructional philosophy for literature, although so far they seem to have made more progress in articulating specific teaching routines

and book lists than they have in resolving such issues as the relationship between reading skills and literary strategies, between reading achievement and literary knowledge, and between reading experiences and literary experiences. It appears that reading skills instruction is still the primary mission of elementary school, and literature still is regarded as something to be done after reading skills have been sufficiently developed. What is evident from this study is that these teachers are concerned about nurturing a love of reading, as well as developing reading skills. The question of what constitutes the body of literary knowledge and experiences appropriate for children prior to secondary school, however, still remains largely undefined.

## Notes

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## APPENDIX A. TABLES

Table 1
Full Length Literature Reported Used for Read-Aloud

| Title | Awards | Grade Levels | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog-Mercer Mayer | ALA, K | 2 | 1 |
| A Taste of Blackberries-Doris Buchanan Smith | TE | 3, 4 | 2 |
| A Wrinkle in Time-Madeleine L'Engle | A, H, LJ, NM | 3, 4 | 4 |
| All-Of-A-Kind Family-Sydney Taylor | A, H, LJ, NT, CWF | 4 | 1 |
| Are You My Mother?-P. Eastman | WC | 1 | 1 |
| Berenstain Bear Books-Stan and Jan Berenstain | | 1 | 0 |
| Black Beauty-Ann Sewell | | 3, 6 | 3 |
| Books by Arnold Lobel | | 1 | 3 |
| Books by Beverly Cleary | | 3, 4 | 2 |
| Books by Carolyn Haywood | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Don Freeman | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Dr. Seuss | | K,1 | 2 |
| Books by Eric Carle | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Erza Jack Keats | | K,1 | 3 |
| Books by Hans Christian Andersen | | 3 | 1 |
| Books by Russell Hoban | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Jack Prelutsky | | 1, SpEd | 2 |
| Books by Johanna Hurwitz | | 2 | 1 |
| Books by John Bellairs | | 5 | 1 |
| Books by Judith Viorst | | 3 | 1 |
| Books by Judy Blume | | 4/5 | 1 |
| Books by Laura Ingalls Wilder | | 1/2,1 | 2 |
| Books by Leo Leonni | | 1 | 2 |
| Books by Margaret Brown Wise | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Maurice Sendak | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Mercer Mayer | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Natalie Babbitt | | 2, 3 | 2 |
| Books by Norman Bridwell | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Patricia Coombs | | 1/2 | 1 |
| Books by Peggy Parish | | 3 | 1 |
| Books by Robert McCloskey | | 1 | 1 |
| Books by Robert Munsch | | 3/4 | 1 |
| Books by Shel Silverstein | | 1, 3/4 | 2 |
| Books by Tomie dePaola | | 3 | 1 |
| Bridge to Terabithia-Katherine Paterson | A, H, NM | 4, 4/5 | 2 |

| Title | Awards | Grade Levels | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bunnicula-Deborah and James Howe | NT, PW, R, SLJ, AYRC, FYRC, HNA, ICCA, NGSA, PNRA, SCCBA, DCF | 2 | 1 |
| Charlotte's Web-E.B. White | A, ALADB, H, LJ, TE, WC, NMRU | 1,2,3,4, 6,8 | |
| Christmas on the Mayflower -Wilma Pitchford Hays | | 2 | 1 |
| Clay Pot Boy | | Rdg | 1 |
| Cricket in Times Square-George Selden | A, B, C, E, H, LJ, WC, ALAN | 5 | 1 |
| Crystal, The Story of the Baby Whale | | 5 | 1 |
| Dear Mr. Henshaw-Beverly Cleary | C, DCFA, H, HFHL, K, PW, R, SLJ, NTNBY, NM | 6 | 1 |
| Farmer Boy-Laura Ingalls Wilder | H, LJ, NT | 2, 3 | 2 |
| "Francis" series-Hoban | | 3 | 1 |
| From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler-E.L. Konigsburg | A, C, CE, E, H, K, LJ, NT, WAWA, ALAN, LCSA,NM | 4, 6 | 2 |
| George and Martha-James Marshall | A, ACEI, B, H, K, L, NT SLJ, WC, NTBBY | SpEd | 1 |
| George's Marvelous Medicine-Roald Dahl | SLJ, TE | 4 | 1 |
| Heidi-Johann Spyri | A, CS, E, PW, SLJ, WC | 3 | 1 |
| Henry Reed series-Keith Robertson | | 4 | 3 |
| How To Eat Fried Worms-Thomas Rockwell | A, K, LJ | 3/4 | 1 |
| Indian in the Cupboard-Lynne Reid Banks | H, NT, PW, SLJ, CYRM, PNRA | 4 | 1 |
| Island of the Blue Dolphins-Scott O'Dell | A,B,BE,BJ,C,CS, E, H, LJ, NT, TE, WC, WH, WJ, WAWA, NM | 4/5 | 1 |
| James and the Giant Peach-Roald Dahl | A,B,E,K, SLJ, T, WC, Z | 3 | 1 |
| Jumanji-Chris Van Allsburg | CALD | 3/4 | 1 |
| Liar, Liar Pants on Fire-Miriam Cohen | A, CE, SLJ, WC | 2 | 1 |
| Lincoln: A Photobiography-Russell Freedman | A, H, K, PW, SLJ, NM | 6 | 1 |
| Little House on the Prairie- Laura Ingalls Wilder | A, H, LJ, NT | 3, Rdg | 2 |
| Little Men-Louisa May Alcott | WC | 6 | 1 |
| Little Women-Louisa May Alcott | TE | 6 | 1 |
| Maggie and the Pirate-Erza Jack Keats | | 1 | 1 |
| Max, The Dog That Refused to Die | | 4/5 | 1 |
| Mixed-Up Max | | SpEd | 1 |
| Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH- Robert O'Brien H, ALAN, NM | | 4, 5 | 4 |

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| Title | Awards | Grade Levels | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Dad Lives in a Downtown Motel-Peggy Mann | | 4/5 | 1 |
| My Side of the Mountain -Jean Craighead George | H, NT, TE, ALAN, NM | 4 | 3 |
| Nursery Rhymes | | K | 1 |
| Olga the Polga | | 1 | 1 |
| On Market Street-Arnold Lobel | H, NT, ALAN, NTBI, CALD | Rdg | 1 |
| Paddington stories-Michael Bond | | K | 1 |
| Pennies for the Piper-S. McLean | CE, HB, K, PW, SLJ, VOYA | 4 | 1 |
| Pigericks-Arnold Lobel | | Rdg | 1 |
| Pippi Longstocking-Astrid Lindgren | A, BE, BSL, CE, E, H, TE WC | 2 | 1 |
| Ride a Purple Pelican-Jack Prelutsky | | 1, Rdg | 2 |
| Rosie's Walk-Pat Hutchins | | K | 1 |
| Sarah, Plain and Tall-Patricia MacLachlan | | 5 | 1 |
| Sing Down the Moon-Scott O'Dell | A, C, CS, H, NT, OB, NM | 4 | 1 |
| Snow White | | K | 1 |
| Sounder-William Armstrong | A, C, SLJ, TE, MTBA, NM | 4 | 1 |
| Stone Fox-John Reynolds Gardiner | PW, SLJ, WC | 3/4, Rdg | 3 |
| Stuart Little-E.B. White | H, LJ | 3, 4 | 3 |
| Summer of the Swans-Betsy Byars | A, C, CE, CS, E, H, HG, L, SLJ, TE, WC, WJ, NM | 5 | 1 |
| Superfudge-Judy Blume | TE | 3, 4 | 2 |
| Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing-Judy Blume | A, C, PW | 3, 4 | 2 |
| The Adventures of Tom Sawyer-Mark Twain | | 5 | 1 |
| The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room -Patricia Reilly Giff | A, PW, SLJ | 3 | 1 |
| The Best Christmas Pageant Ever -Barbara Robinson | A, H, PW, TE | 2,3,4,5 | 6 |
| The BFG-Roald Dahl | | 2 | 1 |
| The Boy From the UFO-M. Clark | | 2 | 1 |
| The Enormous Egg-Oliver Butterworth | A, H, K, LJ, NT, TE, WC | 3 | 1 |
| The Five Little Peppers & How They Grew-Margaret Sidney | | 6 | |
| The Hatchet | | 6 | 1 |
| The Headless Roommate and Other Tales of Terror | | 5/6 | 1 |
| The House of Dies Drear-Virginia Hamilton | A, BE, CE, CS, H, NT, TE, WC, WJ, ALAN, SLJ, BB | 5 | 1 |
| The Hungry Caterpillar-Eric Carle | | 1 | 1 |
| The Incredible Journey-Shelia Burnsford | TE | 5 | 1 |
| The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe-C.S. Lewis | A, CE, H, SLJ, TE | 4 | 3 |

| Title | Awards | Grade Levels | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Snowy Day-Ezra Jack Keats | | 5 | 1 |
| The Trumpet of the Swan-E.B. White | LJ, NT | 3 | 1 |
| The Twits-Roald Dahl | | 3 | 1 |
| The Underground Railroad | | 2 | 1 |
| The Unfortunately Book | | K | 1 |
| The Winter Bear-Ruth Craft | | 1 | 1 |
| Tough Luck, Karen-Johanna Hurwitz | K, PW | 2 | 1 |
| Treasure Island-Robert Louis Stevenson | | 6 | 1 |
| Tuck Everlasting-Natalie Babbitt | NT, PW, SLJ, ALAN | 3 | 1 |
| Uncle Wiggily series-Howard Garos | | 3 | 1 |
| Winnie the Pooh-Alexander Milne | ALA, CE, LJ, TE | 2 | 1 |
| Whale Songs | | 5 | 1 |

Key to Abbreviations (Awards)

| | |
|---|---|
| A | Booklist/American Library Association |
| ALADB | American Library Association Distinguished Book |
| ALAN | American Library Association Notable |
| B | Best Books for Children (RR Bowker & Co) |
| BE | Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades (American Library Association) |
| C | Bulletin for the Center for Children's Books (Univ of Chicago) |
| CA | Christopher Award |
| CALD | Caldecott Medal Award |
| CE | Association for Childhood Education International |
| CS | Books of the Year (Child Study Association) |
| CWF | Charles W. Fuller Award |
| CYRM | California Young Reader Medal |
| DCFA | Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award |
| E | Elementary School Library (Bro-Dart Foundation) |
| H | Horn Book |
| HFHL | Horn Book Fanfare Honor List |
| K | Kirkus Review |
| LCSA | Lewis Carroll Shelf Award |
| LJ | Library Journal |
| NBY | Notable Book of the Year |
| NCA | Northwest Children's Award |
| NM | Newbery Medal Award |
| NMRU | Newbery Award Runner-up |
| NT | New York Times |
| NTBI | New York Times Best Illustrated Book of the Year |
| NTNBY | New York Times Notable Book of the Year |
| NTBBY | New York Times Best Book of the Year |
| PNRA | Pacific Northwest Reading Award |

| | |
|---|---|
| PW | Publisher's Weekly |
| R | Reading Teacher |
| SCCBA | South Carolina's Children's Book Award |
| SLJ | School Library Journal |
| SLJBB | School Library Journal Best Book |
| TE | National Council of Teachers of English |
| VOYA | Voice of Youth Advocates |
| WAWA | William Allen White Award |
| WC | HW Wilson Company, Children's Catalog |
| WH | " " " " , High School |
| WJ | " " " " , Junior High |
| Z | Read-Aloud Handbook (Jim Trelease) |

Table 2
Time Allocation for Read-Aloud, K-6

(Note: Not all respondents indicated how much time they allocated or when)

| Grade | Allocated Time | When Allocated |
|---|---|---|
| K | 5-10/daily | first thing in a.m. or last |
| K | 5-15/daily | sometimes during rdg, science or social studies |
| K | ?(2 stories)daily | 1/3 or so into day(a.m.) |
| K | 15-20/daily | after lunch |
| K | 15/two times/week | (not indicated) |
| 1 | 15-20/daily | after recess |
| 1 | 15/daily | in afternoon |
| 1 | 30(2x15)daily | a.m. & after lunch |
| 1 | 3 or 4 books/daily | (not indicated) |
| 1 | 15-30/daily | after lunch |
| 1 | ?/daily | no set time |
| 1 | 20/daily | after recess,also to open day |
| 1 | 25-30/daily | after lunch |
| 1/2 | 20daily | in a.m. |
| 2 | 10/daily | first thing in a.m. |
| 2 | 15/daily | after lunch |
| 2 | 20/three times/week | (not indicated) |
| 2 | 10/daily | whenever she can snatch 10 minutes |
| 3 | 20-30/daily | after lunch & recess |
| 3 | 20/daily | after lunch & recess pl |
| 3 | 20-25/daily | after lunch |
| 3 | 10/daily | end of day |
| 3 | 20/daily | (not indicated) |
| 3 | 20/daily | after recess-list person |
| 3 | 15-20/daily | after lunch |
| 3 | 20-30/daily | before lunch |
| 3/4 | 5-10/daily | before lunch |
| 3/4 | 10/daily | after lunch or end of day |
| 4 | 10-15/daily | during snack |
| 4 | 15-20/daily | during snack |
| 4 | 15-20/daily | during snack |
| 4 | 10-15/daily | after recess |
| 4 | 10/daily | after lunch |
| 4 | 15-20/daily | (not indicated) |
| 4/5 | 15-20/daily | after lunch |
| 5 | 5-10/daily | morning |
| 5 | 20-30/daily | last thing of the day |
| 5 | 10-15/daily | (not indicated) |

| Grade | Allocated Time | When Allocated |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | 20-30/weekly | Friday afternoon |
| 5/6 | 10-15/once a month | (not indicated) |
| 6 | 10/daily | beginning of reading |
| 6 | No regular time(3 books a yr) | not regular time |
| 6 | 10/two times/week | (not indicated) |
| 6 | 20 hours/year | (not indicated) |
| G & T* | 10-15/irregular | (not indicated) |
| Rdg | 5/daily | at end of remedial rdg. |
| Rdg | 7-8/three times/week | (not indicated) |
| Rdg | 10/three times/week | (not indicated) |
| Rdg | 10-15/2x week(more in June) | (not indicated) |
| Resource | 30/week | (not indicated) |
| Resource | 10-15/daily | before lunch |

*G & T = Gifted and Talented Specialist

Table 3: Time allocated to Independent Reading, K-6
(Note: Not all respondents indicated time allocations)

| Grade | Time in school | Time out of school |
|---|---|---|
| K | 5/daily | |
| K | 60/daily | / |
| 1/2 | 25/daily | |
| 1 | 15-20/daily | |
| 1 | 20/2Xwk | |
| 1 | 20/daily | |
| 1 | 30/daily | |
| 1 | 10/daily | |
| 1 | 15/irreg | |
| 2 | | / |
| 2 | 20-25/4Xwk | |
| 3/4 | 10-15/daily | |
| 3/4 | 15/3Xwk | |
| 3/4 | irreg | |
| 3 | 10/daily | |
| 3 | 20/3Xwk | |
| 3 | 60/wkly | |
| 3 | 45/2Xwk | 15-20/daily |
| 4/5 | 30-45/daily | |
| 4 | 10/2-3Xwk | |
| 4 | 15-20/3-4Xwk | |
| 4 | 20/1Xwk | |
| 5/6 | 45/3Xwk | |
| 5 | 10-15/irreg | |
| 5 | 30-45/1 Xwk/ | |
| 5 | 10-15/daily | / |
| 5 | 15/daily | 15/daily |
| 6 | | / |
| 6 | 15-20/2Xwk | / |
| G&T | | / |
| G&T | | / |
| Reading | 7-10/daily | |
| Reading | 10/2Xwk | |
| Reading | 15/daily | |
| Reading | 15/daily | |

Note: A check mark (/) represents that the activity took place, but no time allocation was indicated. G&T = Gifted and Talented Specialist

APPENDIX B

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS AND SPECIALISTS

1. TEACHER BACKGROUND: (training, teaching experience, coursework)

2. INSTRUCTURAL PHILOSOPHY;
   How do you characterize your approach to using/teaching literature in elementary school?

3. READ-ALOUD:
   How do you select books?
   List the book titles for this year
   How much time do you allocate for this activity?
   Describe your teaching strategies
   How are children tested/expected to respond?

4. INDEPENDENT READING:
   How do you select books?
   List the book titles for this year
   How much time do you allocate for this activity?
   Describe your teaching strategies
   How are children tested/expected to respond?

5. GUIDED READING:
   How do you select books?
   List the book titles for this year
   How much time do you allocate for this activity?
   Describe your teaching strategies
   How are children tested/expected to respond?

6. USE OF LIBRARIES:
   Do you use the library (school/public) for your own preparation of literature lessons?
   Describe how your students use the school/public library
   What is the role of the school/public librarian?
   Describe your teaching strategies/librarian's teaching strategies

7. PROGRAM DIFFERENCES FOR GOOD AND POOR READERS:
   Are there differences in how you select books?
   Are there differences in how you allocate time?
   Are there differences in your teaching strategies?
   Are there differences in how children are tested/expected to respond?

## APPENDIX C

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH SUPERVISORS/ADMINISTRATORS

1. What is the district's or school's policy on teaching literature?
2. Do you personally subscribe to this policy? Why?
3. To what extent is this policy carried out to in K-9 classrooms?
4. How is the use of literature evaluated?
5. Has the literature program undergone any major changes in the past years?
6. What resources are available/used to promote the use of literature?

## APPENDIX D

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH LIBRARIANS

1. Generally, how would you characterize your views on the teaching/use of literature in elementary school?
2. What do you see as the proper role of the school/public libarian in the elementary school literature program? Is that the role you have in this school?
3. Do you have scheduled classes for elementary students? If so, describe what goes on in them.
4. Outside of scheduled classes, how do students use the school library?
5. Do you keep a record of the books signed out by students? Do you have a way of knowing if books have in fact been read?
6. How do you choose books for the library?
7. What funds do you have available for stocking the library?

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